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Translated for this Journal.

The Violin Quartet.

BY A. OULIBICHEFF.

[Concluded from last week.]

V. ONSLOW, &c.—MOZART'S QUARTETS DEDICATED TO HAYDN.

If men like HAYDN and BEETHOVEN, peers of MOZART, have not always been found blameless, when confronted with principles, what shall we say, or rather what shall the principles say of some of the most celebrated musicians, who are still cultivating this branch of the art? There is in the first place the *dramatic* Quartet, in which the violin sings a recitative, which is so expressive that it articulates, speaks, almost narrates. Excellent in fact; but if it were delivered by a

prima donna, one would understand the words still better.

Furthermore we find the Quintet with direct programme: "Fever, Delirium, Convalescence, Complete Recovery" (*Allegro, Melancolico; Scherzo, Dolore; Andante, Convalescenza; Finale, Guarigione.*) You might call a council of physicians, and they would all strictly according to rule recognize in it all the symptoms and phases of these various situations. The physicians perhaps. Nevertheless a singer, who should sing you the fever, closely wrapped up in his bedclothes, the delirium in his shirt or in *puris naturalibus*, the convalescence in his dressing gown, and the recovery in a ball dress, would give you a much clearer bulletin of the case.

Then there is the *Quatuor brillant*, without claim to scientific treatment; a solo with a simple accompaniment. With this our principles have nothing to do. When a soloist plays in a small circle, there must be something, in the want of an orchestra, to supply him with the chords, whether it be three instruments of the violin family or the piano-forte.

On the other hand, we find the *Quatuor brillant* with claim to scientific treatment; that is to say, a leading violin part, which is more difficult than you find it in a Concerto, overlaid with chromatic and enharmonic passages. Two kinds of music in one and the same composition! that is too much for the ear, say the fundamental rules. You have forgotten, these will say to the composer, that the contrapuntal and the *concertante* styles exclude each other through the natural antipathy which springs from their diametrically opposite appeals. The one achieves its success by the close connection and interdependence of the voices; the other by the complete isolation of one voice among the four. You surely have begun with writing first your *violino primo*, and in so doing have conceived as a melodist. Then as an after-thought it has occurred to you to bring in science also; you have rummaged round, after the rules of musical arithmetic, for such settings and such imitations as might, by strict procedure, be introduced into the other voices; and since you are a patient reckoner, your task has finally succeeded. But permit us to remark, that this is seeking with *malice prepense* to be scientific. The real contrapuntists do not compose in this way. They think out the whole at once, and work with inspiration and with fire, without fettering their thoughts beforehand to the conditions of

virtuosity, which are entirely foreign to their purpose. With them the reckoning goes on of itself, without their thinking of it. Your reckoning, on the contrary, is the result of anxious gropings and of painful midnight labors. It is quite exact to the eyes, for the rules of Harmony possess extension, and paper, as they say, is patient; but the ear is the court of true appeal. And what comes of it at last? A seemingly very curious, but in fact very natural result. Namely this: that your Quartet played by the first violin alone, frequently produces a better effect, than when it is played by four.

The conclusion which we draw from the above reasoning, and which is based on theory and confirmed by practice, is, that the two branches in the musical art the most utterly opposed to one another are the Opera and the worked up violin Quartet. So much so, that the moral temperament and the artistic peculiarity, which claims for itself one of those two kinds, seems to be just the absolute negation of the temperament and the artistic peculiarity of the other kind. But was there ever a more tragic musician than the creator of the *Idomeneo*? Or a more cheerful, love-warm, singable musician than the composer of the *Enlèvement du Serail*? Does not such a palpable vocation for works of the theatre, both serious and comic, seem to exclude all other kinds of works? Yet it is this very composer again, who amongst all the instrumentists has raised himself to the highest musical abstraction; who has most strenuously avoided every form of vocal melody and even the shadow of a programme; who has most successfully resisted the Opera, that is to say himself, in that he more than any other master had in so doing to renounce the most effective means of dramatic music: its vehement passion, its recitative, its picturesque description, treatment, singable melody, the magic of execution and all the results calculated upon the power of euphonious effect. Here as everywhere the musician can be explained only through the man. Did not Mozart, the gay boon companion, possess also a contemplative spirit, a dreamy imagination already inclined to melancholy? This poet-musician, who revealed so much tragic grandeur in the choruses in *Idomeneo* and such warmth of passion in the arias of Belmonte,—was he not quite as easily drawn into the most complicated musical calculations? did not all the contrasts of human nature seem to meet in him?

The Quartets dedicated to Haydn, of which the

first three were written in the year 1783, the fourth in 1784 and the two last in 1785, fix decisively the beginning of Mozart's classic period in the twenty-seventh year of his life. These masterpieces of instrumental music no longer show, like his preceding operas, that mixture of the beautiful and the mediocre, nor those traces of the taste of the day, which time threatened to cover with rust. Nothing in the Quartets reveals the date of their composition; everything in them is and ever will be but of yesterday. Criticism stands unnerved before these works, in which there is nothing to criticize, while their character too admits of no positive analysis. I might indeed get over the difficulty, were it my duty as a penny-a-liner in some musical paper, to furnish a detailed report upon the Quartets of Mozart. There is a conventional routine by which such articles are manufactured. They give the key, the tempo and the rhythm; they indicate the æsthetic character by one or more epithets borrowed at random, if the language do not itself offer fitting ones; they single out a period of the melody, a passage of the bass; furthermore, if the criticizing master makes some claims to learning, he explains the kind of double counterpoint which has guided the connection and alternation of the themes in their development; he points out the suspicious fifths, the hidden octaves, the ambiguous accords and the intervals which grow uncertain in their progression, &c., &c. All this is not very difficult; but of what profit is it to the reader? what does it tell him, which he could not learn as well or better by just looking through the notes? what communion is there between the grammatical skeleton thus shown him and the indwelling spirit of the work? It is as if one in estimating a poem should limit his remarks to the structure of the verse, and leave aside the poet's thoughts and purpose. In many cases musical criticism could not do otherwise; it is reduced to choosing between these barren analyses and utter silence, unless it will take refuge in an involved style.

We open at random the collection of Quartets, that are to be separately examined. Chance serves us well; we have the Andante of the Quartet No. 4, in E flat major, before our eyes. What shall criticism say about it? It will say that it is an *Andante con moto* in A \flat major, 6-8 time; that it contains many syncopations, retardations and imitations; that it is an excellently worked up piece, has a mystical coloring, is of an astonishing effect; and that is all that positively can be said about it. But to what state of the soul, known or possible, based on the present or reserved for the future, shall the impression of the piece be referred? Is it a dream, a vision, an ecstatic trance? Is it a result of magnetic clairvoyance, which changes the methods of our conceptive faculty, and substitutes new organs in its place; or is it the beginning of a new birth, in which the conditions of time and space already vanish?

An impalpable theme, without periods and contours, swims in the harmony, and pervades it everywhere, like a melodic fluid. Passing from one voice to another, it leaves behind it, in the one it has just quitted, a sort of long, nebulous train, and thereby joins itself to itself again, begetting in its combinations with other figures, a succession of veiled images, of floating shadows, in which the soul seems to recognize the emblems

of unknown things, whereof it has dreamed, or had some dim presentiment. Out of the midst of this twilight harmony, so filled with enigmatical phantoms, there rises ever and anon a question from the deep, accompanied with a certain panting, as if the soul had taken distance to run forward and break through the spell that controls and hinders it from penetrating to a clear consciousness of that which it perceives. The rhythm would fain indicate the cessation of outward motion; the tied and accented quavers in the deep tones of the Bass rustle like silence in the ear; the numerous retardations, which rob the melody of its contour and the chords of their natural clearness, effect as it were a sort of fading out of visible objects. All is mute and tranquil; all is outwardly at rest. The vision is of a purely spiritual nature. What a piece! even Beethoven, great announcer of the mysteries of the soul, has conceived nothing supernaturally truer, nothing more divinely mystical!

I flatter myself the reader will have understood me. Through the attempt to analyze a piece of such supersensual, pure music, I wished to prove the impossibility of all such analysis. I wished to show how, with the best purpose in the world, a poor critic runs the risk of falling into nonsense, when he undertakes to make intelligible by words feelings and conceptions which in their very nature cannot be expressed. Hence the jargon of literary ultra-romanticism has always seemed to me like an impotent struggle against musical effects, like a fruitless and unfortunate attempt of the language of words to say something, without any aid of logical ideas, as the language of tones says it.

The above relates especially to the six Quartets dedicated to Haydn. Those which Mozart composed earlier, do not count among his classical works, and those which in 1789 were ordered by the king of Prussia, beautiful as they all three are, especially the first, in D major, which is admirable, depart somewhat from the conditions of the wrought Quartet. They are not precisely pure music. A violoncello, which sings in the contralto register and in concert with the first violin, while the violin has to undertake its function in the bass, introduces into these works an element foreign to the laws of the kind, which we have undertaken to define. The solo is at the expense of the whole; the brilliant cantilenas and passages disturb the psychologico-rational development of the themes; the main purpose finds itself sometimes sacrificed to a subordinate intention, and the consequence is, that the Quartets dedicated to the king of Prussia appear weak in style and rather empty in harmony, compared with those perfect and sublime compositions, of whose dedication Haydn alone was worthy, since he alone of all his contemporaries was so far in advance of his age as to appreciate his young rival, and so magnanimous as to acknowledge himself beaten.

Don Pasquale.

It is more than ten years since this *chef-d'œuvre* of Italian Opera buffa was first produced at the Théâtre Italien in Paris. It was composed expressly for Mme. GRISI and Signori MARIO, TAMBURINI, and LABLACHE, and obtained an immense success. *Don Pasquale* is, perhaps, more intimately identified with the name of Sig. Mario than even with that of Sig. Lablache himself, as it was the character of Ern-

esto that the great tenor achieved his first renown in Paris and London. Indeed, the *Com'è gentil* alone is never sung in public or private without directly recalling the name of Mario—a proof how thoroughly popular he has made himself in the part. How familiar Sig. Lablache had rendered the character of the Don it is unnecessary to say. The part has never been attempted on the Italian stage in England by any other artist—a tacit concession that *Don Pasquale* has but one true representative. When Donizetti first saw Mme. Grisi as Rosina in the *Barbiere*, he determined to write a comic part for her, so deeply was he impressed with her genuine comic powers; and, indeed, so thoroughly did he and the librettist adapt themselves to her talents, that Norina has been as good as a sealed volume to all other artistes since. We have seen many attempt the character of Norina—among whom some celebrities—but we never saw one succeed like Mme. Grisi. * * * *

The music of *Don Pasquale* is not so difficult for the voice as that of *L'Élixir d'Amore*; but it requires more *finesse*, more refinement, and greater elevation of style. Mme. Grisi's Norina must stand among her finest and most vividly realized conceptions. In its way it is as true as Norma, Lucrezia Borgia, or Ninetta. The great artist acted and sang on Thursday night as in her best days, when her Norina took the town by storm, and *Don Pasquale* was the opera "in vogue."

The *Don Pasquale* of Sig. Lablache is inapproachable, irresistible, indescribable. It is the incarnation of mirth, simplicity, and folly; and constitutes a glorious companion to Doctor Bartolo, another transcendent portrait of an immense basso.—*Lond. Mus. World*, July, 1854.

Henry Squires in Italy.

From the Naples Journal of Art.

The subjects of our artistic sketches have always been some contemporary celebrities. In such cases our words have been but the echoes of universal opinion. We never received the name of exaggerating partizans, because, in speaking of the contralto Borghi, of the baritone Ferri, of the tenor Baucardé, and of other sublime singers, we have done nothing but repeat and put in relief what has been said by the press generally on their merits. The present sketch, however, has not for its heading a name already glorious, but it speaks of one who will be celebrated in future. It does not tell of triumphs achieved in the art, but traces the best founded hopes of successes that will be obtained. Finally, this article is not a history, but a prophecy.

It is almost two years since we made the acquaintance of a young American tenor, who came to Naples to educate himself in the difficult art of singing. From the first moment that we heard his voice, we prophesied to HENRY SQUIRES the most brilliant career on the Italian stage. Our prophecy we repeat even now, and we dare to publish it in the columns of this journal, so sure are we that it will be fulfilled; for whoever has a voice so well toned, flexible, and sympathetic, and of such an extended compass, and possesses dramatic intelligence and sentiment, cannot miss placing himself among the first singers of the day. Yes, with all these requisites young Squires is abundantly provided; and to the gifts of the mind he joins the graces of person. Henry Squires, having all these, will become in a short time one of the first tenors of our most renowned theatres. This is the prophecy we have made of him. Nor after all is what we say of him mere prophecy. The public essays young Squires has made thus far are not few, and in all of them he has succeeded in winning for himself the esteem and sympathy of the spectators. Saying nothing of the part he so splendidly sustained in a sacred concert given at Caserta; saying nothing of the solo song by him in the church of St. Theresa, where he received the sincerest congratulations from the Professors of the Orchestra of the San Carlo, who accompanied him, our readers will surely remember the warm praises we said had been given him in a concert at the theatre of the

Fiorentini, where he sustained himself equally with the singers of the San Carlo, with whom he was there associated, and perhaps even surpassed them in respect to the freshness of his voice, and his performance of the most difficult variations. There Squires sang beautifully the romance of "Louise Miller," "*Quando le sere al placido*," and it was for the masterly execution of this that our journal then said that his voice was capable of combining the double advantage of sweetness and strength.

All these essays, however, are a mere nothing compared to the clamorous applause which greeted him on the stage of the theatre St. Ferdinando of Naples, as first tenor in the *Troatore* of Verdi. This magic opera was there repeated no less than twenty-seven times, but among the first performers Squires alone was applauded in all his pieces; for him only the people ran to the theatre, and he on his part omitted nothing to attract still more the sympathies of the public. Furthermore, that the merit of the young tenor may shine more brightly, we must not pass over in silence the fact that he made his debut on the Italian stage in less than ten months after his arrival here, where he came a stranger to the language and the art.

At the same theatre a new opera entitled *La Leonilda*, by the Master Ruta, was performed, written expressly for Squires, and had all the singers shown the ability and earnestness of the tenor (who was applauded in every piece), the *Leonilda* would have met with a brilliant triumph.

These successes, perhaps unlooked for by the American Tenor, might have made him vain; but Squires knew how far he was deserving those bursts of applause. He felt that he was satisfying the Neapolitan public only by the richness of his voice and the grace of his singing; but that he did not deserve all their praise in this: that he had not yet entirely dismissed his English accent, nor was his pronunciation of their language exact. Finally, he comprehended that the great charm of Italian singing consists in the emission of vowels, in the accent of syllables and in the sound of the word. On this account having finished the season's engagement at the St. Ferdinando, he did not wish to accept the warm invitations of other Impresarios, and having retired from public life, he has applied himself exclusively in private to the study of our language.

Almost a year since we heard Squires at Sorrento, the birth-place of Torquato Tasso, and the impression he then produced upon us is beyond description. Since then the volume of his voice has been greatly developed, the frankness with which he emits and colors his chromatics would honor the most accomplished artist. At Sorrento, in the beautiful Sorrento, there took place a public concert at which were united as spectators illustrious travellers and the elite of the Capital; among those there was his Royal Highness, the Count of Syracuse, the King's brother, who after the concert, was pleased to wait upon Squires and express his satisfaction at the beauty of his voice and the superior style of his singing. Squires in this concert sang the air of the *Pirata*, and the duetto of the *Don Pasquale*; but where he produced a real enthusiasm was in the terzetto of the *Lombardi*.

After all this, we do not believe that there is any one who will say that our prophecy in regard to the future of Squires was by any means the production of an overwrought imagination. We have said that Squires will be a first tenor in the Italian opera, and next autumn the spectators of one of the most famous theatres of Italy will see our prophecy completely fulfilled.

THE SNOW-SHOWER.

BY WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

Stand here by my side and turn, I pray,
On the lake thy gentle eyes;
The clouds hang over it heavy and grey,
And dark and silent the water lies;
And out of that frozen mist the snow
In wavering flakes begins to flow;
Flake after flake,
They sink in the dark and silent lake.

See how in a living swarm they come
From the chambers beyond that misty veil,
Some hover awhile in the air, and some
Rush prone from the sky like summer hail.
All, dropping swiftly or settling slow,
Meet, and are still in the depth below;
Flake after flake,
Dissolved in the dark and silent lake.

Here delicate snow stars out of the cloud
Come floating downward in airy play,
Like spangles dropped from the glistening crowd
That whiten by night the milky-way:
There broader and burlier masses fall;
The sullen water buries them all;
Flake after flake,
All drowned in the dark and silent lake.

And some, as on tender wings they glide
From their chilly birth-cloud, dim and grey,
Are joined in their fall, and, side by side,
Come clinging along their unsteady way,
As friend with friend or husband with wife
Makes, hand in hand, the passage of life;
Each mated flake
Soon sinks in the dark and silent lake.

Lo! while we are gazing, in swifter haste
Stream down the snows, till the air is white,
As, myriads by myriads madly chased,
They fling themselves from their shadowy height.
The fair, frail creatures of middle sky,
What speed they make, with their grave so nigh;
Flake after flake,
To lie in the dark and silent lake!

I see in thy gentle eyes a tear;
They turn to me in sorrowful thought;
Thou thinkest of friends, the good and dear,
Who were for a time and now are not;
Like these fair children of cloud and frost,
That glisten a moment and then are lost;
Flake after flake,
All lost in the dark and silent lake.

Yet look again, for the clouds divide,
And a gleam of blue on the water lies,
And far away, on the mountain side,
A sunbeam falls from the opening skies;
But the hurrying host that flew between
The cloud and the water no more is seen;
Flake after flake,
At rest in the dark and silent lake.

From the "Knickerbocker Gallery."

Diary Abroad.—No. 9.

BERLIN, Dec. 13.—There is still fun in the world! Think of my "catching it" for praising one of the new composers too much! and that too, not only in the *Journal of Music*, but from a friend who fills no small part of a private letter with rejoicing and laughing at my calamity.

[Five minutes pause, to laugh.]

As just that number of the *Journal*, which had the criticism on the *Prophète*, has failed to reach us, I have but a very faint idea of the particular items, which are thought to give me a claim to friendly relations with Dogberry, nor can I easily decide in what manner it is best to swallow the sugared pill. There are the explanatory, explanatory, justificatory, and the injured innocence manners; the lofty contemptuous manner; the whipped spaniel manner; the I-know-as-much-about-it-as-you manner; the Hotspur manner and the Falstaff manner; and indeed the catalogue of modes in which to receive the communication of "Subscriber" might be quite indefinitely increased.

That he does not agree with me in my views, is all very well; but to insinuate anything against the right of a man to write himself down, as well as up, is most "tolerable and not to be endured." My patriotism fires at the thought. Things have come to a very pretty pass if a man can't write himself down a poor—donkey, Madam. I claim to be an American; yea, verily and forsooth, a Native American citizen. The spread Eagle, with a grid-iron hanging to his neck, imprinted upon my passport, is now quietly communing with all sorts of unclean birds and beasts down at the police office, and

sustaining the most friendly relations even with the dirty birds of Austria, Russia and Prussia!—(the first two of which are double headed; are two heads better than one?) Has not an American citizen rights? Is not the strong arm of the great Republic stretched out over all lands to protect and defend her every [white] child? Under her broad aegis, and the spreading folds of her banner—[for more information upon this topic, *Vide* Fourth of July Orations of Y. Hill. Esq., and Blank Valentine, M. D., *passim*]. Does glorious America, over the hand and seal of her Secretary of State, solemnly promise to protect even the foreign born, who have transferred their national affection to her, (now and then forsooth, some poor fellow, returning to the home of his fathers, is caught and forced into the army for two or three years—but his adopted land *promises* well), and shall "Subscriber" circumscribe us, right from the plain of Lexington and the hill of Breed?

I might write "Subscriber" a letter, I suppose, were it not for the difficulty of the matter of his address and proper title—perhaps through the Editor of the *Journal* this may be surmounted—at all events I will make a rough draft of one.

BERLIN—So-and-so.

Rev. and dear Sir, [or is "Subscriber" a woman?]

Many thanks for the very kind and flattering terms in which you speak of some of my endeavors to instruct and please, and many thanks—upon other grounds though—for the notice of my labors which is not quite so flattering. You have at all events afforded me an opportunity of saying a word, which I have wished aforesaid to say, but felt might be considered intrusive.

And in the first place, General, a word upon the "Diary." Soon after Dwight's *Journal* was launched, I felt the want of some mode of expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas upon music, which, hardly worth a place in regular correspondence from New York, might yet be of value to some readers. I felt also the necessity of some one who would without fear or favor, expose humbug, castigate musical sinners, lay bare false pretensions, and in short declare war against the Anti-Music of both the stage and auditorium—of Wyzaker with his fiddle, Wyzaker with his critical notice, Wyzaker talking like an oracle to his neighbors, and Wyzaker with cane and umbrella. Nobody would do it. I determined to do it as well as I could. To this end something like the "Diary of a Dilettante" in the London *Harmonicon* seemed well adapted, and that form was chosen, it being left to the critical eye and taste of the Editor of the *Journal* to destroy what he saw fit. A thousand things are in place in a private record, or when in such a form, as you will see on a moment's thought. The "Diary," however, became a more important record of the results of musical observations and studies than I expected, and soon assumed distinctly a twofold character. In matters of history, no time, nor labor has been spared to insure perfect correctness—though mistakes will sometimes occur; where the object has been to record passing trains of thought, and emotion, the effects of music and musical performances, the "Diary" is, as its name implies, an actual transcript of those thoughts and emotions, noted at the time, written out at the first spare hour and not often copied. "So much the worse," do you say?

I am not sure of that, Colonel, I have not found it so in the letters and diaries of others, why should it be the worse in this case? Any great mistake, real or supposed, is pretty sure to find an exposé, (judging from my own experience,) and an honest expression of feeling or opinion, which has not had its brains crushed out by making fine writing of it, is of double value—if in fact it be worth expressing at all. Granted that it be worth this, and the individuality, the "peculiarities" of the writer, which you feel in reading it, form a principal charm. It follows moreover that articles so written take their tone from the mood of their author when they are conceived. For instance, as I read your letter the main idea of this Diaristic popped into my mind, and though some days have passed before I could find time to put it upon paper, I cannot keep the cap and bells off my head. And this brings me to the second division of my discourse.

Now, my dear Major, just for the sake of argument, let it be granted that the unlucky Diaristic upon the "Prophet" was all wrong, I stand here ready to justify

it to the last drop of ink. Imagine the mood I was in—nay, imagine yourself in my position on the evening of September 20th, 1854, and think whether in your little pocket journal you might not also have written "Evening, 'Prophet' at the theatre; magnificent, especially orchestra and chorus." You are just from a sick bed, and that too a second time within a few months, and the bracing September weather fills you "with a free exhilarating feeling, which with me goes beyond everything," as a dear friend writes; you have been almost entirely cut off from music for many months, and yet the craving for it has only been enhanced to the utmost by the delights of travel—for you had seen the glorious "Smile of the Great Spirit," Winnepiseogee, had passed down the valley of the Connecticut in its loveliest season, had visited the magnificent prairies and noble floods of Minnesota—and all for the first time, and then immediately after had enjoyed a passage across the ocean, which was but a pleasure trip. Now, for a day or two, you have been rambling about once more in those old, quaint streets of Hanover, in which every house front has its separate German and Middle-Age character and expression, carrying you away back into history one moment, and the next calling up innumerable feelings and experiences, which in other days had made your first months in Europe a period during which you were, "whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell." June 20th you are riding down the banks of the unrivalled Hudson on your way home from the rivers, lakes, prairies, bluffs, forests and waterfalls of the West, where all save Nature is of to-day and for the future; September 20th, you are where all is of the past, speaks of the past, breaths of the past, or if anything be not of the past, it is incongruous and out of place. The queer old Inn—"Zum Römischen Kaiser"—in which you are stopping, with its funny old court, and witchy old passages, and great rambling old staircases, leading, nobody save the initiated knows where; the picturesque old house, with its innumerable carvings and sculptures of Biblical history, in which Leibnitz lived and which looks into the dining room from the opposite corner, and all those jolly old dwellings to the right and left up and down the streets—these, even, have their effect upon you, soften your heart and make you disposed to do justice and more than justice to all the world.

Under such circumstances, and in such a mood, Captain, I heard the "Prophet" once more, and heard it exquisitely given. Is it still such a mystery how I could write its eulogy, even upon the supposition that that eulogy be all wrong? Indeed, I do believe I should have been tolerant even of Bellini, that evening. (This very day Meyerbeer came into the Library where I was at work, and as he stood there talking so pleasantly with the professor, I wanted to bless the little man's every Jewish feature, and the bald spot upon his head into the bargain, for the pleasure he has afforded me!)

And now, 'Squire, thirdly, a word upon "music of a purely dramatic character." We agree in making Beethoven a king—the monarch of the Tone realm. We put purely instrumental music—that which, unaided by scenery, or text, depends alone for success upon its inherent excellence, its beauty of melody and harmony, and its definiteness of expression—above all other. We agree too in our estimate of that "Crucifixion" by Rubens, in the Antwerp Museum, that heavenly Madonna in Dresden, and those immortal works of Kaulbach here in Berlin. We have both stood uncovered in "Cathedrals vast," filled with the awe of the place. Had you been with me this evening you too would have felt, when the curtain rose upon the various scenes in "Oberon," that nothing but genius, and that of a high order, could have produced those exquisite landscapes, those views of the sea, those noble Saracenic and Gothic halls—yet this was nothing but scene-painting! You may possibly have wondered at my estimate of *Euryanthe*—I felt it to be a failure, viewed as operatic music; I felt the "Prophet" to be a success, though nothing but music for the stage. It must be that scene music, as well as scene painting, has its merit.

As to special criticisms, Judge, we have written, what we have written, and it is recorded in Dwight. We will not strive. I claim no infallibility, I admit the possibility that "the eulogy of the 'Prophet'" may all be wrong—but at the present writing I give way no jot, no tittle, no indivisible part of a hair. I shall with all honesty how-

ever confess the error, first, when I am convinced of it; and to this end I must see and carefully consider the unlucky article in question in the light of another hearing of the opera—and secondly, when—but let me tell you a story to put you in good humor.

Good old Mrs. Morse, or Thayer, or Bacon, or some other common Natick name, I forget what, lived in the Golden Age of huge fire-places and mighty wood piles. She had a voice sharp, quick and decided, and a hand big as the hand of fate, and heavy as one of Cass's speeches. She had also a son Jerry. "At the period our tale opens" Jerry is seen sitting upon a log in the corner, musing—and as Jerry mused the fire burned—low.

"Jerry, go bring me in a handful of wood." (Staccato.)

"When I 'eady," and Jerry muses again.

[Six bars rest, and a ♪.]

"Jerry, go bring me in a handful of wood!" (Staccatissimo.)

"When I 'eady," and Jerry muses on.

A very few bars rest, and his contemplations are broken by a fearful explosion caused by the sudden contact of a heavy body in rapid motion—the hand namely—with a body of great inertia at rest—namely the head of Jerry.

"Gw-a-cious! I 'eady now!"

And secondly, Doctor, when I am ready!

Musical Correspondence.

FROM NEW YORK.

CHAMBER CONCERT—PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY—MISS LEHMANN—CAMILLA URSO AND PAUL JULIEN.

JAN. 22.—The tables seem, for once, to have been turned; for while you have been enjoying, during the last week, GRISI and MARIO's rendering of Italian music, we have had, in the course of a few days, two classical concerts. Classical at least as any concerts can be here, where, in the forming of a programme such considerations as the policy of a society, or the will of a volunteer performance are brought into play. By good luck, however, the latter was propitious in the case of Mr. EISELDE's Quartet Soirée last Tuesday evening, and we had really a good performance. The beautiful Quartets, No. 2, in D minor, of MOZART, and op. 18, No. 2, in E, of BEETHOVEN, were played with the usual excellence of "Mr. Eisefeld's Quartet Party," who deserve our sincere thanks for making us acquainted with so many compositions of this class. A Mr. WOELTGE, a new comer, as I hear, gave us MENDELSSOHN's Trio, op. 49. He plays with great force and much fluency, but with little expression, or rather that false expression which is produced (to the ears of some, at least,) by not striking the bass and treble exactly together. I have hardly ever observed this very annoying habit to such a degree in any public player.

Mrs. GEORGINA STUART, with her exquisite, bell-like voice, and her sister, Miss ANNA GRISWOLD, were the singers. The latter, who has naturally also a fine voice, a mezzo-soprano, labored under a disadvantage in having just recovered from a severe throat disease, and would have done better, both for her own sake and that of the audience, to have deferred her re-appearance in public a little longer. It was really painful to observe how little physical command she had over her voice. She sang *Dove sono i bei momenti*, from "Figaro," instead of, *Voi che sapete*, (as the programme had it,) and with her sister, a humming little duet by Mr. Eisefeld, "There sat a playful bird on a spray," the only quite modern composition in the programme, but which, fresh and graceful, and making the most of the rather absurd translation by Mr. Baskerville, of Reinick's *Zwiegespräch*, afforded a pleasing contrast to the more serious character of the rest of the music.

On Saturday evening the second Philharmonic concert took place. The house, (Niblo's theatre,) was crowded to its utmost capacity, which is very encouraging, and suggests the possibility of having the concerts at the Academy next winter. But a few years ago serious fears were entertained that the society would not be sustained another season; and now the Philharmonic concerts are the most fashionable of the winter,—indeed, I fear almost too fashionable. But even if it be so, there is no denying that these concerts and these rehearsals improve the public taste, slowly though it may be. Rome was not built in a day.

The Symphony was MENDELSSOHN's No. 4, in A, the Andante of which is like a poem. It was played well and with spirit. So also the *Preciosa* Overture of WEBER, which is suggestive of a free, joyous gipsy life. The second overture was WALLACE's "Maritana," finely instrumented, it seemed to me, but reminding the hearer, in its airs, of a great many other compositions. CAMILLA URSO,—hardly now to be called *little*, for she has grown to a handsome, womanly Miss, with rich complexion and splendid eyes, and a very pleasing, modest demeanor—played a fantasia from *Lucrezia*, and, on being encored, several of the "Carnival" variations, two or three of them with a good deal of humor. She plays well, and very well for a woman, having so few competitors among her own sex; but she has not the genius of PAUL JULIEN, nor has she his wonderful stroke, which, indeed I have never heard equalled.

A solo on the Cornet à Pistons was admirably performed by a Mr. LOUIS SCHREIBER, of the "Conservatoire of Cologne," but, like most solos on wind instruments, was very uninteresting.

Last, but not least, Miss LEHMANN appeared to even more advantage than in the first concert, being unembarrassed by the nervousness and timidity natural to a first appearance before a strange public. I only regret that her choice of pieces was not a better one. *Una voce* would have been very well, had it not been sung here by every singer of any pretensions for the last ten years; but I can hardly pardon her making us listen to an aria from *la Favorita*, (which, by the way, the critic of this morning's *Times* mentions as: *ah mon Fernand!* from *LUCEZIA*!) at a Philharmonic concert. I have been told that she at first intended singing the great aria from *Fidelio*, but, for some reason, changed her mind. That would have been a treat, indeed, for she sang what she did sing so well that we could imagine how finely, with her beautiful voice, she would render that sublime work. Or why not give us some German songs? Would they be too trivial, I wonder, for a Philharmonic concert? I had the great enjoyment of hearing her sing about a dozen of them, by FRANZ, SCHUBERT, SCHUMANN and MENDELSSOHN, in a private circle a few evenings since—she lets her soul speak out in those. But whatever she may sing, I consider her quite an acquisition for New York, as a resident artist, and likely, in course of time, to become a favorite. Let us hope that when she arrives at this point, she will so far presume upon her popularity as to make our public acquainted, and, by degrees, familiar with the higher kind of opera, as represented in the works of Beethoven, Mozart, Gluck, etc.

On the same evening with the Philharmonic, and at Niblo's Saloon, closely adjoining the theatre, PAUL JULIEN gave a concert for the benefit of the poor. I hear it was very successful—but would it not have savored less of artist-rivalry and caprice, if he had chosen some other night?

BORNONIS.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JAN. 27, 1855.

Italian Opera.

IL BARBIERE DI SEVIGLIA.

Nothing more exquisite for ear and eye, for mind and fancy, has the stage ever offered us, than the performance of Rossini's immortal "Barber," on Saturday afternoon. Taken as an artistic whole, of genial musical composition, fine combination of vocal interpreters, hearty, felicitous, refined comic action, we must regard it as by far the best entertainment until then, or since then, which the GRISI and MARIO company have given us. Why can it not also be made a regular evening performance? As it was, the audience was very large, although far short of that of any evening. Was it thought that musical comedy could not draw like tragedy? that it is less exciting? that people want to have their souls harrowed up? that few have musical taste enough to appreciate an opera in which good music counts for even more than plot and action? that the public, tradition-bound, refuse to know the GRISI save as Norma, Borgia, and the like? and finally that there is a prevailing notion, whether right or wrong, that Comedy *per se* is necessarily inferior to whatsoever tragedy,—a lower type of the imaginative faculty?—We might argue the point on general grounds, and suggest that if true tragedy gives us the Sublime, true comedy may in equal perfection give us the Beautiful, and give it in a strong and wholesome shape, free from the morbid sentimentality, which is so apt to drive us from the feebly beautiful to the sublimely terrible; moreover, that nowhere do the spiritual faculties of mind, heart and imagination more completely find their freedom, soar above commonplace and dull earthly limits, and have free play in the ideal, in a sort of foretaste and rehearsal of fine harmonies, than in the humorous creations of the brain of genius.

At all events it is safe to say, that a good comedy is a finer thing than a poor tragedy. And if you compare most tragedies that keep the stage (excepting Shakspeare and the few) with the popular comedies and even farces, the intense plays with the free and funny ones, who can deny that the latter are the most genuine and wholesome? It is only the difference between a frankly comic and a would-be serious extravaganza. Extravagance is a part of the soul's birthright and estate; but Queen Mab, and no grave tragedy queen presides by divine right over that playground. In truth, when we consider what a blessing it is to escape from commonplace and dullness *safely*, without rushing blindfold into the dread arms of Fate; how much more invigorating a hearty laugh is than much amateur heroism—certainly than so much solemn humbug and melo-dramatic intensity; we feel that the purely *recreative* function of Art can scarcely be esteemed too highly. Life itself is too intensely, too unspeakably tragical, to need tragical reminders. If the complement of the Actual be the Ideal, then the complement of all this actual tragedy is hardly to be sought in other, wilful tragedies, which, save in the hands of highest genius, do but caricature the struggle and the Destiny known too well to all of us.

In the Italian Opera our case becomes particularly strong. The real Italian fun or *buffo* is by all odds the most genuine, the most original, imaginative, genial, ever fresh, and national thing you can find in the whole modern Italian opera. It is that element of it which the all-sided genius of Mozart sympathetically and perforce borrowed in his Leporello. After the hot-house intensities of Donizetti's effective dramas, it refreshes us in his "Don Pasquale" and "Elixir of Love." And in "the Barber," the youthfulest, the heartiest, the most sparkling, genial and inventive of Rossini's operas, a work evidently struck out at a heat, the whole at once, as Mozart says *he* wrote, in some happy summer "heat-lightning" of the brain, we have perhaps the best thing, *musically* considered, which Italian opera has produced. In its way, the best thing after Mozart; and if it closely reminds you of him, if it resembles, in style wholly, and in the way of distinct allusion, passage with passage, frequently, the *Nozze di Figaro*, &c., it only shows with what a genuine sympathy and sense of power this happy and mercurial Italian wrought.

In the "Barber of Seville," then, Grisi and Mario were before us in by all odds the *best music*, in which they have sung or are likely to sing to us, with the exception of *Don Giovanni*; and for this troupe we doubt not even better than that. What a wealth of subtle, sparkling musical ideas it has! one broad, copious, uninterrupted river running from perennial springs of melody and harmony from the beginning to the end; harmony so richly instrumented, so bright and Titian-like in color! How piquant and charming all its little melodic themes, and how the ear woos their reiteration! What warm, rich blending of voices and instruments in the concerted pieces! and what glorious, all-alive activity in the accompaniments, buoying up, like swollen freshets, the choral masses in those perfectly Rossini-an *crescendos* of the finales of the various acts,—yet done apparently with such simple means! Our enjoyment had thus in the first place the substantial groundwork of good music, real Art and genius felt in every fibre of the composition.—This we must note as a rare privilege in our operatic experiences.

Then the principal artists were admirably competent, and entered into their parts with a hearty will, as if resting from the fever of ambition and the public gaze, and having among themselves a little free, private, genuine enjoyment of Art and fun and very dear music of a very favorite composer, purely for its own sake. It was the artistic recreation of artists, at which we were permitted to *assist*, but, as it were, requested to imagine ourselves not present. Of the five principal characters, each acted and sang the better because the others were so good. There was no overdoing in their impersonation; none of those stale tricks of broad farce by which we have been wont to see the whole thing sunk below the humor of the composer and below the taste of an audience refined enough to enjoy such music. Sig. SUSINI's Dr. Bartolo was particularly excellent in this respect; the character was not all pinched and starved to one absurd point of suspicious jealousy; there was some juiciness and gentlemanliness left to the old guardian; in the scene of the music lesson, he comes out with quite a genuine, mellow dilettantism. Almaviva (MARIO) was not disgustingly boisterous as the

drunken officer; and Sig. DUBREUIL, though far from able to render musically the mock solemnity and mystery of the song: *la Calomnie*, on the whole did the solemn rogue Don Basilio fairly, and kept the burlesque within bounds. BARDALI's Figaro was admirable, the best that has been heard or seen here; we may well doubt whether another so large a man, except the big LABLACHE himself, could render it so well. In every note of the music, whether *cantabile* or rapid *parlando*, or as supporting the vocal harmony with his rich bass, his voice and style told perfectly. Such fresh preservation of one of the richest and most resonant of voices,—ripe, is the word for it,—such unerring judgment and consummate style, such perfect adaptation of himself to his parts, stately or comic, each in its entirety, such fire and verve, are certainly remarkable for a man of sixty. His *Al idea di quel metallo* had the ring of the true metal. As for MARIO, the very music for the exhibition of his sweet, light, liquid tenor, and his elegant and fluent style of vocalization, was that in the part of the Count Almaviva. His opening serenade: *Ecco ridente*, was as perfect as one could well conceive of, and with such a voice the music had all the sweetness of a summer's night it it. His rapid *sotto voce* roudades in a later piece were a most perfect piece of vocal execution; Sontag's soprano had not a finer command of *fioriture*; his tones would often glide up with the subtle grace and continuity of light flame, or the lithe movements of a beautiful snake; his *parlando* was musical, refined and gentlemanly, as was his acting.

Of GRISI's musico-comic talent we had heard, and after seeing her Rosina we believed. It was the best impersonation we have seen, unless we except SONTAG; full of grace and spirit and of girlish *espiglerie*; her *cento trappole* peeped out in every look and action; yet all was kept within the chastest limits of lady-like propriety and Art. She seemed younger in person and younger and sweeter in voice than before; although such bravura work as the *Una voce poco fa*, well as it was executed, with a pretty free adaptation of its florid text to the singer's conveniences, betrayed the wear of the voice too plainly. Her *Dunque io sono* was more agreeable; but throughout, in this as in all her parts, her music was but the fluid medium of her arch impersonation, and was ever true in intention and character. At times there were passages of rare sweetness in her singing. In the concerted pieces it was always fine.

The trio *Zitti, zitti* was perfection itself in the delivery of all three artists; in the rich chords where the voices dwell upon the word *piano*, it seemed as if all the melody and sweetness of the whole opera flowed into one climax of beauty and expression. But there is no room to single out gems, where every leaf glistened with its own fresh dew-drop. The choruses and ensembles were generally quite good, and the delicious orchestral accompaniments left no place barren or confused in this tropical garden of musical flowers. Dame Bertha, the housekeeper, as personated by Sig. MORRA, came in for a fair share of the credit of the humorous and harmonious whole. Long live "the Barber," and may it not be the last time that we shall hear it so well represented!

NORMA.

On Monday evening the theatre presented a superb spectacle. The auditorium, thronged at

an early hour, in every part from parquet to gallery (from whose dizzy heights the eager listeners leaned forward) with the most brilliant company ever brought together into our city, formed one ideal, fairy-like *ensemble* with the stage; one wanted eyes to see on every side at once. For the first time the full beauty of the new Boston Theatre appeared. Such was the eagerness to verify the tradition of "GRISI'S NORMA." It was Grisi, and not Bellini, or his music, that most went for. *Norma*, as music, as an opera, is in itself, we fancy, one of the feeblest attractions that could be offered to our music-lovers. *Norma* is in truth one of the least inspiring or inspired operas that keep the stage. Its music is mostly dull, monotonous and hacknied; a continued succession of sentimental, sugary melody, which cloy and yields no nourishment. The inspiration out of which it was written seems to have been a morbid sentiment, a subjective harping upon one chord. The *Sonnambula*, less ambitious in its plan, is fresher, stronger, fuller of melodic invention, and wears better. One's nerves and feelings lose tone and vigor in long listening to such music; it overcomes one like a dog-day heat. Think of those tedious stretches of thin melody in the duets between Adalgisa and Pollio, and between *Norma* and Adalgisa in the third act! Think how utterly uninteresting the whole music and the whole part of Pollio! It has some manly ring in the trio of the second and in the last act; but the opening romanza, where he relates his dream, is the very sugar and water of music. *Casta diva* is a noble melody; but this it was not supposed that Grisi, after the ravages that time has made in her voice, could sing to any great perfection; nor did she; its large, sustained phrasing she got over rather hastily, and marked breathing spells were necessary to fit her for the vocal gymnastics of the florid allegro that succeeds. There are fine touches of musical invention here and there; and there are passages enough to give scope to the supreme dramatic genius of a Grisi, which was exerted that night in a manner that surpassed anything of the kind, which we have ever witnessed on the stage, whether sung or spoken.

The tradition of Grisi's *Norma* was indeed verified. It was a great lyrical effort, great throughout; great not merely in single lightning flashes of power and passion, as where she denounces Pollio: *Ah, non tremare, O perfido!* and in the trio that succeeds; or again in the last scene: *Qual cor tradisti*; but great in the sustained unity and consistency of the entire impersonation, where every shade and change of feeling, from the mother's tenderness to the sublime rage of the priestess, had just its weight and color of expression; and greater still, that nothing was overdone; the total impression was of the most classical repose and harmony. So perfect was it in the conception and in feeling, that after the *Casta diva*, you forget all defects of voice. The voice was but the medium and instrument of passion; it did not permit you to separate it from the action and judge its efforts as mere singing; the music was absorbed into the dramatic impersonation, and was simply the strong light in which that was steeped and grew transparent; which we take to be the true office of dramatic music. Doubtless the greater largeness and richness of that voice when in its prime, when its use had not to be husbanded against emphatic moments,

would have added to the luxury of the whole; but we can scarcely doubt upon the other hand, that the art had grown more than the voice had waned, and to the lover of essential beauty there is a peculiar potency in that more spiritual charm which glows through outward symptoms of decay. And in this case, indeed, one feels that the voice has only been the generous victim of the entireness and unstinted *abandon* of her acting, and so honors the faithful servant all the more. Yet occasionally, amid the pervading and pre-occupying charm of the impersonation, the mere voice claims admiration for itself. There was now and then a long sustained high note of the purest and most penetrating beauty; or a remarkable trill, the unconscious birth as it were of passion, or an impassioned phrase or whole passage, as in the *non tremare*, before named, where every note was like the hand-writing on the wall; and in the tenderer scenes the tear was in the voice likewise. Of the superb figure, classical poses, gestures, looks, and all pervading majesty and grace of Grisi in *Norma*, we can say nothing that has not been said thousands of times; as she stood upon the altar steps, it was the picture made alive which we have all seen of her years ago. Then she became the focus of a splendid and ideal *coup d'œil*, embracing scenic stage and elegantly peopled and excited auditorium, worth going far to see and be a conscious atom of for once.

MARIO's part was, as we have said, one of the most uninteresting and ungrateful for a *primo tenore*. Yet he made the most of Consul Pollio. He sang the music throughout in his full chest voice, resolved if possible to be the Roman, if the play does involve him in a mean predicament. He sang splendidly in the trio and in the last scene, which is about all the interesting music that falls to his part, and he shared in all the enthusiastic recalls, although everything that night was purely secondary to the GRISI. Mario's voice also must be past its prime, for he has to husband its best strength for glorious moments, (less so this time, to be sure), making a delicious *sotto voce* avail for the rest. But from anything that we have here seen, we cannot tax him with indifferent slighting of his rôles. Sometimes, in his opening recitatives, there is a little hardness and ordinariness in some of his tones; but his good star prevails as he goes on, and he has the art of finding and producing more and more successfully, as the play warms, the best intrinsic beauty of his organ.

SUSINI, in voice, person and majestic bearing, made a grand Arch-Druid Oroveso; but for some time his voice, as is the wont of many heavy basses, sank below true pitch. Signorina DONOVANI has not a bad voice, and sang her first piece in a way that elicited sincere and encouraging applause. She won respect also by the earnest carefulness with which she carried through the part of Adalgisa. But she has a painful guttural way of producing her tones, and by no means enough vocal virtuosity to get triumphantly through that long and florid stretch of duets in the middle of the play, which seem to have owed all their significance to the vocal display of the great singers for whom they were originally written. The Druid choruses were effectively sung, and the whole *mise en scène* was quite imposing; of the orchestra we scarcely thought, so absorbing was Grisi, so uninteresting in itself the music—that is, beyond a certain

young and rose-hued period of one's musical experience, which, as one generation graduates, another of course enters.

The triumph of that night was Grisi's. The triumph of *Norma* always, we can fancy, belongs in the main to Grisi and to Pasta before her, whether to them in the first instance, or as reflected by them on their imitators. Grisi gone, and we may well doubt if the opera shall have life enough left in it to save it. For what we have said of it musically, is nothing new or strange. It is the common feeling of most music-lovers who have musical experience. It keeps its place upon the stage, then, more by secondary and factitious reasons. Its popularity may be about one part in ten musical,—and that is the interest which semi-musical people, mostly sentimental, young people, feel in such continuous sugary melody, all in one key of sentiment. The other nine parts are due to Pasta, who "created the rôle" of *Norma*, and to Grisi, who with equal or more dramatic genius, reproduces it; to the circumstance that it keeps one or two persons continually in exclusive prominence upon the stage, the multitude having always more personal curiosity than they have musical, or intellectual, or artistic; especially when those persons happen to be a Grisi, a Mario!—finally, to the tragic spell of the plot, and to the classical mantle that is thrown about the whole thing on the stage. But Grisi's triumph was complete; she must have renewed her best days in the magnetism of such a splendid and responsive audience. Breathless attention, murmured bravos, bursts of uncontrollable applause, callings before the curtain, showers of bouquets, tears and tremulous lips in trying to speak about it, were her trophies.

LA FAVORITA.

We did not hear this last week, and were glad on Wednesday evening to get a considerably better impression than we had before entertained of the musical and dramatic merit of this work of Donizetti. It was admirably performed, as well as put upon the stage; the cloister scene in the last act being the most imposing, (in full keeping with the solemn church-like music and the great tragic acting of both Grisi and Mario there,) that we remember on the stage. It begins with an uncommonly elaborate sort of an overture, in which there is no lack of contrapuntal art; and in the concerted pieces generally, especially the Andante finale of the third act, and the chants and choruses of the monks, Donizetti seems to have undertaken to display a musician's learning. This has not escaped the attention of that generous critic, LISZT, who pronounces the *Favorita*, with the *Don Sebastian*, "the most carefully elaborated product, and the richest blossom of Donizetti's talent," and compares that it is so little known in Germany, compared with *Lucia*, *Lucrezia*, &c. He tells us moreover it was written for the Grand Opera of Paris, and for Mme. STOLZ, who was then reigning *Favorite-absolute*; and that Donizetti followed the example of Rossini (in his "Tell") in writing for a stage which made so much higher dramatic requirements of him, than any theatres in Italy. Yet, regarded as a musical composition simply, it certainly cannot be called a very inspired *chef-d'œuvre*, and abounds in the sickly common-places of modern operatic intensity. It is its powerful dramatic structure which, with such great interpreters as we have, accounts for its success.

Grisi's Leonora, as a lyric-dramatic effort, appeared to us as great, if not even greater, than her Norma. Its greatness was more constantly apparent in every passage and detail, since the dramatic interest here is never suspended as in Norma for long episodes of vocal virtuosity, duets, &c. It was a wonderfully complete work of Art. Having such easy command of the musical resources, she could use them as if without thinking of them, wholly absorbed in her dramatic character; and then music becomes an upbubbling tide beneath the actor, making it easier to sustain the intense effort of embodying and realizing an imaginary character and fate through several hours. For music, in the lyric drama, not only helps the illusion to the audience, but insulates the actor in his own consciousness from all that is of every-day and common-place, surrounds him with a visionary sphere, and supplies ideal atmosphere to his ideal part. Grisi is enough mistress of the vocal art for that. As a singer, some of her best efforts were heard this time. Her *O mio Fernando*, was most expressive, penetrating, powerful singing, especially in the latter movement. And in every way her tragical last scene was beyond all praise.

In this opera, as is not the case in *Norma*, the interest is shared by three other characters, which were nobly sustained. For pathetic song and action, Fernando proved to be MARIO's best part so far. His *Spirto gentil* (he used other words—*Angiol d'amor*, or something of that sound) was the perfection of voice, art and expression. SALVI's was fine, but it wept itself away to nothing, and the thing became stereotyped with him. This you could not imagine of Mario's rendering. The song itself is peculiar, and peculiarly for him. It is in truth not a song, not a melody at all; but a very ingeniously contrived chant, or musical declamation, where the voice utters sentences upon one note, in such a way that the expression and the charm reside in each pure single tone itself, its breadth, its sweetness, its swell and vanish, its tremulous fulness of soul and feeling. Never have we known an audience so wrought upon by pure tone. It was even better upon repetition. BADIALI's king Alfonso was superb throughout, and SUSINI wielded the thunders of the Church with fitting energy and grandeur.

Crowded Out.—Opera absorbs all, this week, and we are obliged to postpone notice of Mlle. DE LAMOTTE's fine concert, and the opening of the magnificent Organ built by the Messrs. SUMMONS for the new church in Somerset street, (this, however, there will be another chance to hear on Monday afternoon); of new publications, &c. &c.

The Reduced Prices.—Last week we alluded to the warfare going on among music-sellers, and hinted a few conjectures, purely our own, as to the probable effect which the new system of selling "non-copyright" music at half price may have upon the publication and sale of good music. We are no parties to the controversy, and think it too purely a mercantile matter to interest the readers of an Art Journal. We print the following communication, setting forth one side of the matter, since we promised so to do, perhaps unwisely. Another long communication of the same sort has been received, which we must decline publishing. Our advertising columns are of course open to it, as to all such matters purely concerning the business interests of the writer.

NEW YORK, Jan. 16, 1855.

Editor Dwight's Journal of Music:

DEAR SIR—Your article on the *War among the Music publishers*, was evidently written from a representation of one side of the affair, and we deem it a duty to ourselves, and we believe you will in justice to the public, give an unprejudiced statement of the necessities which required this change, in a business point of view, as well as the probable results in bringing forward whatever talent we may now have or may hereafter have in this country. You are doubtless aware that every piece of music reprinted from foreign copies, which has become at all popular, has found numerous publishers, and a large amount of capital invested in duplicating editions of one piece, when one or at most two sets of plates would have supplied the entire demand. The reason for duplicating the editions was simply that it was cheaper for a publisher to re-engage it than buy from the original publisher; because the price was much too high. Then, again, when from five to twenty editions come in competition in the market the result has been that each pub-

lisher has striven to overbid the others in offering discounts to the trade, till 25, 33 1-3 and even 40 per cent, in addition to the usual trade discount, has been offered and made,—yet, with all this discount to dealers, there has been no corresponding discount to the public. These large discounts of course led to competition in the retail and regular dealers throughout the country, who would find their neighbors in the book, jewelry or other trade underselling them in their own goods. It has been of daily occurrence that persons would come into our store and refuse to pay the price asked for and printed upon music as the *ret* prices, because they could buy and were in the habit of buying it elsewhere for very much less.

These and many other matters of the kind have led us to reflect how best to cure the evils of the trade, and we have determined that on this principle alone can it be done. We will place a price upon our music at which we will sell to the public, which shall be as low as it can be afforded, allowing a remunerative profit to the publisher and dealer.

The public will first be benefited in this by a very considerable reduction in price. The dealers will be benefited by being enabled to control the trade of their respective districts and to know that their customers are as well served by them as by any body else.

The publisher will be benefited by not having his pieces duplicated as it will be the interest of other publishers to buy from him and invest their capital in some other good work, the entire or principal sale of which he will secure by being the first publisher. The cause of music will be advanced by the publishers seeking more diligently for good copyright works and others, calling forth whatever latent genius we may have among us. It is not our intention to speak against those who have combined to crush our movement, for many of them are our warm personal friends and for whom we have the highest esteem,—suffice it to say we are willing they should put their price on their own music just as they please, and we claim the same privilege. We have chosen in the first place to put it so as to conform to the established currency of our country; and though our prices are very much less than heretofore, yet a considerable portion of the trade in our large Western cities are perfectly satisfied with the discounts made to them, and have entered fully into our plans as being a great reform which will be beneficial to all. We have not asked or expected any one to reprint Beethoven's or Mozart's Sonatas at a less price than would afford a profit; and when in committee one of your own largest and most respectable Boston houses supported our views and resolutions, and presented them to the so-called *Board of Trade* with his approval. These resolutions, as well as ourselves, were ruled out of the Board because we would not first sign a renunciation of our position and be bound by the dictation of the Board, not only in the publication price and sale of our non-copyrights, but also of our copyrights, worthless or not as you may choose to deem them, yet our property and ours alone, and in which we will never suffer dictation. We are now ostracized from the trade, and they are bound under a heavy penalty not to sell to us music or to supply any one who will sell to us; and, furthermore, they will not buy our music or sell to any one who will sell at the reduced prices.

We are content to stand on this ground before the public, but we will continue to manage our own business in accordance with our own judgment, and will suffer dictation from no one. We have neither the power nor the desire to change the prices of others, and will suffer no dictation as regards the prices we shall charge for our goods. We have forgotten to say that our copyrights are very considerably reduced, as well as our non-copyrights—this is an important correction of your article.

WM. HALL & SON.

Advertisements.

HEWS' PATENT AMERICAN ACTION PIANO-FORTE.

From the illustrious Pianist, L. M. GOTTSCHALK, to Mr. Hews' Agent at New York.

NEW YORK, Dec. 5, 1853.

Mr. N. P. CURTIS: Dear Sir,—Having had the pleasure of performing upon Geo. Hews' American Patent Action Piano, at the World's Fair in this city the present year, and other of his Pianos at your Warehouses, which afforded me much gratification, I cheerfully recommend them to the public. I am very glad of the improvement in the action. These instruments likewise are of excellent tone, owing, no doubt, to the perfection of the scales. Very Respectfully,

L. M. GOTTSCHALK.

GEORGE HEWS has removed to the building lately occupied by Messrs. Chickering & Sons, No. 379 Washington Street. Jan. 27 '54

F. F. MÜLLER,

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND ORGANIST at the Old South Church; Organist and Pianist of the Handel & Haydn Society, Musical Education Society, &c. &c.

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THE OPERA!

EXTRA PERFORMANCE.

NORMA

Will be repeated THIS (SATURDAY) AFTERNOON, 27th inst., commencing at 3 o'clock.

Tickets \$2. Amphitheatre 75 cents. Places may be secured at WADE'S Music Store, No. 197 Washington street, and at the Theatre.

BOSTON THEATRE.

THE OPERA!

Mr. HACKETT, thankful for the liberal encouragement afforded his enterprise, and for the brilliant and cheering reception accorded to MADAME GRISI and SIGNOR MARIO, and the other eminent Artists comprising his *corps lyrique*, by the citizens of Boston, has determined to prolong their stay here

ONE WEEK MORE,

and to reduce accordingly the already very limited number of farewell performances hitherto designed for New York, prior to their return thence to Europe by U. S. mail steamer Atlantic, on the 21st of next month.

During the week MADAME GRISI and SIGNOR MARIO will perform as follows:

MONDAY, Jan. 29th, for the first time in America,

DON GIOVANNI.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 31st, for the last time in America,

LUCREZIA BORGIA.

FRIDAY, Feb. 2d,

A Favorite Opera.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, Feb. 3d, last time in America,

I PURITANI.

Places for all or either of the above representations, may be procured at WADE'S, 197 Washington street.

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The Mendelssohn Quintette Club,

Respectfully announce to their subscribers and the public of Boston that their

SIXTH CONCERT

Of the Series will take place

On Tuesday Evening, Jan'y 30th, AT MESSRS. CHICKERING'S ROOMS, Assisted by

Mr. JAMES C. D. PARKER, Pianist.

Schumann's Piano Quintette—Rondo Polacca for Piano and Violoncello, by Chopin—Beethoven's Grand Quartette in F, No. 7,—and Mozart's Clarinet's Quintette, etc., will be presented.

Half Packages of Tickets, \$2.50: Single tickets, \$1, can be obtained at the usual places. The Concert will commence at 7½ o'clock precisely.

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AT THE

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For terms, and other particulars, see Circular, which may be had at the Piano Rooms of Messrs. G. J. Webb & Co., No. 3 Winter street, where, also, Mr. Blanchard may be found between the hours of 2 and 3 P. M.

N. B. Mr. Blanchard will be happy to give instruction in schools and academies, if situated in the immediate vicinity.

Having examined the plan of instruction adopted in the Young Ladies' Vocal Music School, we most cheerfully say that it meets our unqualified approbation.

From the success which has heretofore attended the instructions of Mr. Blanchard we feel assured that his school will merit the fullest confidence of the public.

LOWELL MASON, Geo. J. Webb, F. F. Muller,
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Sept 30

ADOLPH KIELBLOCK,
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A CARD.—Messrs. GARTNER and JUNGnickel are ready to receive applications to furnish music (duos, trios, &c. for violin and piano) for private parties. Nov 18

SIGNOR AUGUSTO BENDELARI, Professor of Music, from Naples, proposes to teach SINGING and the PIANO during the coming winter, in Boston, both by private and class lessons. The latter will be given to CHORAL CLASSES, on Tuesday and Friday evenings, for which purpose the Messrs. Chickering have kindly offered the use of their Rooms, in order to afford to as many as possible the advantages of a system of public musical instruction that has been attended with great success in Europe.

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Sept 9

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Sept 23

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Residence, 24 West Cedar Street.

Reference, Geo. J. Webb, Esq. May 20.

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Apr 29

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Miss K. E. Prince, Salem.

Miss Nichols, 20 South St.

Miss May, 6 Franklin Place.

Feb. 18.

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Conductor of the Orchestral Union, and

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Sept 16

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